

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 CAIRO 23113

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (REFERENCES TO "KILOMETER 121" (3),
SHOULD BE "KILOMETER 101")

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, EG, IS
SUBJECT: GAMASY ON ISMAILIA SUMMIT AND TALKS WITH
- WEIZMAN

SUMMARY: GAMASY SAYS LITTLE CAME OUT OF HIS TALKS WITH
WEIZMAN AND ISMAILIA SUMMIT. ISRAELIS STILL INSISTING
ON OLD POSITIONS. IT REMINDED HIM OF KILOMETER 101 TALKS.
ALTHOUGH WEIZMAN SPOKE OF A ONE AND HALF YEAR WITHDRAWAL
PERIOD FROM SINAI, BEGIN PROPOSED THREE TO FIVE YEARS.
GAMASY ASSUMES THIS IS FOR BARGAINING PURPOSES. WHEN
ISRAELI EFFORTS KEEP MILITARY AIRFIELDS IN SINAI TURNED
DOWN, BEGIN PROPOSED THEY BE CIVILIANIZED AND
JOINTLY OPERATED BY EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI PERSONNEL.
NO REPLY YET GIVEN, BUT GAMASY DOUBTS THIS CONCEPT
COMMENDS ITSELF TO SADAT. RETENTION OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS
IN SINAI UNACCEPTABLE. ISMAILIA TALKS FOCUSED MAINLY ON
WEST BANK. EFFORTS FIND MUTUALLY AGREEABLE FORMULA FOR
DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES UNSUCCESSFUL. GAMASY PERSONALLY
DOUBTS ISRAELIS PREPARED TO ACCEPT WEST BANK/GAZA SETTLE-
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MENT ACCEPTABLE TO ARABS. IN WAKE ISMAILIA TALKS,
EGYPTIAN MILITARY, LIKE CIVILIAN POPULATION, IS DEPRESSED.
WIDESPREAD FEELING IN MILITARY THAT ISMAILIA SUMMIT WAS
FAILURE. DMI HAS SUGGESTED GAMASY VISIT MILITARY INSTALLA-
TIONS TO EXPLAIN FACTS IN EFFORT RAISE MORALE. NO FIRM
DATE YET SET FOR DEFENSE MINISTERS' MEETING, BUT GAMASY
WOULD PREFER IT NO EARLIER THAN JANUARY 9. END SUMMARY.

1. IN HOUR LONG MEETING TODAY WITH MINWAR GAMASY ON VARIOUS OUTSTANDING MATTERS, I HAD OPPORTUNITY ASK HIS REACTION TO HIS RECENT TALKS WITH WEIZMAN AND ISMAILIA SUMMIT. GAMASY WAS NOT LOATH TO RESPOND. SPEAKING DISPASSIONATELY, HE SAID THAT THE ISRAELIS WILL NEVER CHANGE. WEIZMAN HAD "STARTED FROM ZERO." WHEN BEGIN CAME TO ISMAILIA, THE ISRAELI PRIMIN "STARTED FROM BELOW ZERO." GAMASY HAD SENSED LITTLE APPRECIATION OR UNDERSTANDING ON THE PART OF THE ISRAELIS OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SADAT'S TRIP TO JERUSALEM. THE ISRAELIS APPEAR TO HAVE POCKETED THAT TRIP AND THE VARIOUS CONCESSIONS SADAT HAD SUBSEQUENTLY MADE ON DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS, OPEN BORDERS, FREE TRADE, ETC., AND WERE GOING ALONG IN "THE SAME OLD WAY." GAMASY WOULD NOT BUY MY CONTENTION THAT BEGIN HAS COME A LONG WAY IN HIS THINKING. WHAT BEGIN HAD PRESENTED, ESPECIALLY WITH RESPECT TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA, WAS LITTLE MORE THAN DAYAN'S FUNCTIONAL DIVISION. IN SINAI, THE ISRAELI DEMANDS WERE THE SAME ONES THAT HE HAD HEARD AT VARIOUS TIMES DURING PAST FEW YEARS.

2. ASKED ABOUT HIS TALKS WITH WEIZMAN, GAMASY SAID LITTLE HAD BEEN ACCOMPLISHED OTHER THAN TO IDENTIFY ISRAELI DEMANDS. WEIZMAN HAD INSISTED HE HAD NO AUTHORITY TO AGREE TO ANYTHING AND THAT ALL DECISIONS WOULD HAVE TO
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BE MADE BY BEGIN. PRIDING HIMSELF ON BEING A HAWK, WEIZMAN HAD NOTED THAT ONLY THE ISRAELI HAWKS CAN WORK OUT ANY SORT OF A PEACE SETTLEMENT. AFTER LONG, INCLUSIVE TALKS AT GIANACLIS, GAMASY SAYS HE TOLD WEIZMAN THAT HE HAD HEARD IT ALL BEFORE AT KILOMETER 101. THE CLOCK HAD NOT MOVED BEYOND THAT. PERHAPS THEY OUGHT TO ALL GO BACK TO KILOMETER 101.

3. WEIZMAN PUT FORTH ISRAELI DEMANDS WITH RESPECT TO DEMILITARIZATION OF SINAI, THEIR DESIRE TO RETAIN THE SHEIKH AL SUWAIYID AND RAS AL NAQB AIRFIELDS AND THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS. ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE PRESIDENT, GAMASY HAD MADE IT CLEAR THAT NO CONTINUING ISRAELI PRESENCE IN SINAI WAS ACCEPTABLE AFTER WITHDRAWAL. WEIZMAN HAD TOLD HIM OF ISRAELI READINESS TO WITHDRAW TO THE INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY, BUT IN TWO PHASES. IN RESULTING DISCUSSION ABOUT TIMING OF WITHDRAWAL, WEIZMAN HAD ASKED M/G SHAFIR ("A STUPID MAN," ACCORDING TO GAMASY) HOW LONG A PERIOD WOULD LOGISTICALLY BE NEEDED FOR WITHDRAWAL. SHAFIR HAD REPLIED TWO YEARS. WEIZMAN HAD THEREAFTER SPOKEN OF A YEAR AND A HALF. HOWEVER, WHEN BEGIN CAME, HE HAD PROPOSED THREE TO FIVE YEARS. GAMASY

ASSUMED BEGIN HAD DONE SO FOR BARGAINING PURPOSES AND THAT THIS TIMEFRAME COULD BE WHITTLED DOWN TO TWO OR EVEN ONE AND A HALF YEARS DURING UPCOMING DEFENSE MINISTERS' TALKS.

4. ON THE AIRDROMES, WEIZMAN HAD INITIALLY ASKED THAT THESE BE LEASED TO ISRAEL. GAMASY HAD REFUSED THIS, NOTING THAT UNDER GOE PEACE CONCEPT THESE TWO AIRFIELDS WOULD BE IN THE TEN KILOMETER WIDE, UNEF-MANNED "BUFFER ZONE" ALONG THE BORDER. WEIZMAN HAD THEN PROPOSED THAT THE AIRFIELDS AND A SMALL AREA AROUND THEM BE TURNED OVER TO ISRAEL. THIS HAD ALSO BEEN REFUSED. WHEN BEGIN CAME, HE PROPOSED THAT THE TWO AIRFIELDS BE CIVILIANIZED AND OPERATED JOINTLY BY EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI PERSONNEL.
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NO REPLY HAD BEEN GIVEN AT THE TIME, SINCE SADAT HAD DECIDED HE SIMPLY WISHED TO HEAR THE BEGIN PROPOSALS ON SINAI AND WOULD LATER SUBMIT COUNTER PROPOSALS. HOWEVER, GAMASY DID NOT BELIEVE THE BEGIN CONCEPT COMMENDS ITSELF TO SADAT.

5. WEIZMAN AND LATER BEGIN HAD URGED THAT THE ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS IN SINAI BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN AND THAT THE ISRAELI SETTLERS BE ALLOWED TO RETAIN WEAPONS TO DEFEND THEMSELVES. GAMASY NOTED THERE ARE FOUR SUCH

SETTLEMENTS, THE MAIN ONES BEING YAMIT AND RAFAH ON THE MEDITERRANEAN. ISRAELIS HAVE BUILT A PORT AT YAMIT. THERE ARE TWO SMALLER, LESS IMPORTANT SETTLEMENTS BETWEEN EILAT AND SHARM EL SHEIKH ON GULF OF AQABA. HE HAD TURNED DOWN THIS REQUEST AND SADAT HAD DONE LIKEWISE WHEN BEGIN RAISED THE POINT AT ISMAILIA.

6. MOST OF THE TALKS AT ISMAILIA HAD DEALT WITH THE WEST BANK AND AN EFFORT TO FIND SOME KIND OF A MUTUALLY AGREEABLE FORMULA FOR A DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES. HOURS HAD BEEN SPENT BY THE "LAWYERS" TRYING TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN "SELF-RULE" AND "SELF-DETERMINATION." THEY HAD BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL. GAMASY PERSONALLY DOUBTS THAT THE ISRAELIS WILL BE PREPARED TO AGREE TO A WEST BANK/GAZA SETTLEMENT ACCEPTABLE TO THE ARABS. NOR DID
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HE THINK THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE IN ANY HURRY TO DO SO. AGAIN SPEAKING PERSONALLY, GAMASY OPINED THAT THE WEST BANK SHOULD GO TO JORDAN. ULTIMATELY, PROBABLY AFTER FIVE YEARS, THE PALESTINIANS WILL TAKE OVER JORDAN. THE ISRAELIS KNOW THIS AND ARE AFRAID OF IT.

7. ASKED ABOUT EGYPTIAN MILITARY REACTION TO THE ISMAILIA TALKS, GAMASY SAID THE MILITARY, LIKE THE CIVILIAN POPULATION, IS DEPRESSED. THERE IS A WIDESPREAD FEELING THAT THE ISMAILIA SUMMIT WAS A FAILURE AND THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE NO INTENTION OF ARRIVING AT A JUST AND DURABLE SETTLEMENT. THE MILITARY, ACCORDING TO GAMASY, NEVERTHELESS BELIEVES SADAT DID THE RIGHT THING, AND PLACES THE BLAME ON THE ISRAELIS. THE EGYPTIAN DMI, M/G SHAWKAT, WHO WAS LEAVING GAMASY'S OFFICE AS I WAS GOING IN, HAD JUST REPORTED TO HIM THE NEGATIVE EGYPTIAN MILITARY REACTION. SHAWKAT HAD URGED THAT GAMASY MAKE A TRIP AROUND THE COUNTRY TO THE PRINCIPAL MILITARY INSTALLATIONS AND EXPLAIN THE FACTS. GAMASY DEPLORED THE FACT THAT THE EGYPTIAN PUBLIC MEDIA HAD PLAYED UP THE ISMAILIA MEETING AS THE CULMINATION OF THE PEACE EFFORT WHEN IN FACT IT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING OF WHAT IS CERTAIN TO BE A DIFFICULT AND PROTRACTED NEGOTIATION. THE MILITARY HAD LIKEWISE BEEN AFFECTED BY THIS MISCONCEPTION. HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER HE WILL HAVE THE TIME TO MAKE A SWING AROUND THE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS, BUT SAID SOMETHING OBVIOUSLY MUST BE DONE TO RAISE MILITARY MORALE IN THE WAKE OF THE ISMAILIA MEETING. THEY MUST LEARN THAT PATIENCE IS NEEDED.

8. ASKED ABOUT HIS UPCOMING MEETING WITH WEIZMAN, GAMASY INDICATED THAT NO FIRM DATE HAD YET BEEN SET. HE HAD TOLD WEIZMAN THAT UK DEFENSE MINISTER MULLEY,

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WHOM GAMASY WILL BE HOSTING, WILL LEAVE EGYPT ON JANUARY 7. A MEETING COULD TAKE PLACE ANY TIME FROM THE EIGHTH ON. HE THOUGHT HE NEEDED AT LEAST A DAY TO BONE UP, HENCE FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW, THE EARLIEST CONVENIENT MEETING DATE WOULD BE JANUARY 9. ALTHOUGH GIANACLIS MAY STILL BE THE VENUE, GAMASY EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IT IS TOO REMOTE. SAID HE IS LOOKING FOR A PLACE CLOSER TO CAIRO. GAMASY ALSO INDICATED THAT HE HAD ARRANGED WITH BEGIN AND WEIZMAN THAT MESSAGES CONCERNING THAT MEETING WOULD BE PASSED THROUGH THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN TEL AVIV AND CAIRO AS BEFORE. WEIZMAN MIGHT COME IN AN ISRAELI AIR FORCE PLANE, HOWEVER.

9. COMMENT: GAMASY MADE HIS POINTS WITH NO BITTERNESS, BUT WITH AN AIR OF WHAT MORE CAN YOU EXPECT OF THE ISRAELIS. HE SAID HE HAS RESPECT FOR BEGIN AS A MAN WHO KNOWS WHAT HE WANTS, GOES AFTER IT AND WILL EVENTUALLY GET IT. IN THE PROCESS, EGYPT AND THE ARABS WILL BE THE LOSERS. HE WAS NOT AS IMPRESSED WITH WEIZMAN AS SADAT IS. GAMASY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT, WHEN ASKED BY GAZIT ABOUT FUTURE THREATS TO ISRAELI SECURITY, HE (GAMASY) HAD SAID ANY THREAT WILL COME FROM THE WEST BANK, NOT FROM SINAI OR GOLAN.

10. DEPT MAY WISH PASS THIS MESSAGE TO TEL AVIV. EILTS

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